

PRESS RELEASE

December 6, 2006

MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO STEALING MONEY FROM GROUP HOME

RE: UNITED STATES V. DUANE WIDA

United States Attorney Terrance P. Flynn announced today that Duane Wida, age 41, of Elmira, New York, has pleaded guilty in front of United States District Court Judge David G. Larimer to a felony information charging him with theft of government money, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 641, which carries a maximum sentence of 10 years imprisonment and/or \$250,000 fine.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Richard A. Resnick, who is handling the case, stated that Wida was the residence manager for Pathways Inc., a not-for-profit corporation that provides services to the developmentally disabled. Pathways Inc. operates a group home for six autistic clients in Elmira, New York. Each of these residents receives a monthly personal expense allowance of \$130 taken from their Social Security Disability Insurance provided by the United States government. Wida, as Pathways' residence manager, was responsible for distributing the \$130 to each resident by placing it in a bank bag bearing the resident's name. Between October 2002 and October 2005, Wida stole and converted to

his own use the total amount of \$12,161.38 of the residents' personal expense allowances.

The conviction was the culmination of an investigation on the part of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, under the direction of Laurie J. Bennett , Special Agent in Charge.

Sentencing for Wida is scheduled for March 26, 2007, at 11:00 a.m.

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